

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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R 221030Z FEB 76
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6305
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 1325

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: AF, PK, PFOR
SUBJ: PAK-AFGHAN RELATIONS

REF: ISLAMABAD 1836

1. NOT SURPRISINGLY, DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER ABDULLAH CALLED ME TO SEE HIM FEBRUARY 21, THE DAY AFTER MY RETURN FROM ISLAMABAD. AS I EXPECTED, HE PROBED ME AT LENGTH ABOUT WHAT I HAD LEARNED ON MY TRIP. I TOLD HIM THAT THE GOP HAD RECEIVED THE LATEST AFGHAN COMMUNICATION THROUGH THE TURKS BUT THAT I HAD NOT BEEN GIVEN THE DETAILS OF THAT COMMUNICATION. I SAID IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT THE GOP WILL BE REPLYING ALTHOUGH POSSIBLY NOT UNTIL BHUTTO'S RETURN FROM HIS CURRENT TRIP ABROAD. MORE GENERALLY I SAID THAT IT IS MY IMPRESSION THAT THE GOP DRAWS THE LINE AT DISCUSSIONS OF WHAT IT CONSIDERS ITS INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

2. ABDULLAH TOLD ME LITTLE THAT WE DON'T ALREADY KNOW EXCEPT THAT HE IMPLIED THAT THE GOA'S LATEST COMMUNICATION, IN ADDITION TO SAYING THAT THE RELEASE OF GHAFAR KHAN WOULD NOT BE A SUFFICIENTLY SIGNIFICANT GESTURE TO GET A DIALOGUE STARTED, SET FORTH AN AGENDA FOR A DIALOGUE
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WHICH INCLUDED REFERENCE TO THE SITUATION OF THE NAP.

ABDULLAH SAID, AS SHAHNAWAZ INDICATED (REFTEL) THE PAKS EXPECTED THE AFGHANS TO SAY, THAT THE GOP, IN STATING A WILLINGNESS TO RELEASE GHAFAR KHAN AND IN MAKING A REFERENCE TO THE NAP IN A RECENT, UNSPECIFIED COMMUNICATION, HAS ALREADY DEMONSTRATED ITS WILLINGNESS TO DISCUSS WHAT IT CONSIDERS INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

3. IN CONCLUDING THIS PART OF THE CONVERSATION I STRESSED OUR HOPE THAT A MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE COULD GET UNDERWAY BECAUSE A SOLUTION OF THE DIFFICULTIES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES SEEMS EMINENTLY IN THE INTEREST OF EACH OF THEM AND OF ALL OTHER COUNTRIES WHO ARE THEIR FRIENDS. AS ABDULLAH KEPT TRYING TO GET ME TO TELL HIM WHAT THE PAK POSITION IS AND EXPRESSED "CONFUSION" ABOUT THEIR POSITION, I HAD AMPLE OPPORTUNITY TO TELL HIM, WHICH I DID, THAT HIS VERY "CONFUSION" INDICATED THE NEED FOR DIRECT DISCUSSIONS AND THAT I CERTAINLY WOULD NOT ATTEMPT TO INTERPRET PAK VIEWS FOR THEM.

4. ABDULLAH ALSO BELABORED THE CURRENT PROBLEM OF AFGHANS TRANSITING PAKISTAN. HE SAID THAT THE GOP HAD AGREED TO ISSUE TRANSIT VISAS AT THE PAK-INDIAN BORDER FOR AFGHANS WHO ARE RETURNING HOME AND ARE ILL, ELDERLY OR OFFICIAL, BUT THAT TOURISTS, BUSINESSMEN AND THE LIKE MUST FOLLOW A PROCEDURE THROUGH THE SWISS EMBASSY IN NEW DELHI WHICH CAN TAKE SEVERAL WEEKS. HE ASKED ME TO GET INVOLVED IN THIS PROBLEM, BUT I TOLD HIM I DIDN'T SEE WHO I COULD GET INVOLVED IN A PURELY PAK-AFGHAN MATTER. I ALSO SUGGESTED HE TALK TO THE PAK AMBASSADOR ABOUT THIS MATTER, BUT HE IS NOT INCLINED TO DO SO. I HAD IN MIND THAT THE AFGHAN CHARGE IN ISLAMABAD TOLD ME AND DCM LUPPI ON FEBRUARY 20 THAT HE THINKS THE PAKISTANIS ARE CREATIING THIS ISSUE SO THAT THEY WILL BE IN A POSITION TO HAVE SOMETHING TO TALK ABOUT OTHER THAN THE CENTRAL ISSUE IF AND WHEN A DIALOGUE GETS STARTED.
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